

**In the Claims:**

Claims 1-20 (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A device for the modification of a layer of target material comprising:  
A a source of electromagnetic radiation; and  
an intermediate substance containing an absorbing material having high absorption of at least one frequency band emerging from said source of electromagnetic radiation positioned between the target material and the source of electromagnetic radiation, the intermediate substance being in contact with the target material;  
whereby when the intermediate substance is irradiated by said electromagnetic source, the energy is converted to thermal energy sufficient to bring about modification in the target material and the intermediate substance retains the absorbing material and substantially prevents the absorbing material from penetrating into the target material.
22. (currently amended) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is contains a suspension containing high absorbing particles.
23. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a thin film containing high absorbing particles.
24. (currently amended) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a thin film containing high absorbing particles in a quantity that causes substantially all of the electromagnetic energy to be converted into ~~heat~~ thermal energy and at least 25% of the thermal energy is conducted into the target material.
25. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a paper containing a highly absorbing substance.
26. (canceled)
27. (canceled)
28. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is made of agar containing highly absorbing particles.
29. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a solid mixture containing highly absorbing particles.
30. (currently amended) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a thermally insulating solid mixture containing highly absorbing particles constructed so ~~it~~ (??)

that at least some of the electromagnetic energy absorbed and converted into thermal energy is transferred to the target material in a longer period of time.

31. (currently amended) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is contains a liquid mixture containing highly absorbing particles.

32. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a gas mixture containing highly absorbing particles.

33. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a thermal insulator containing highly absorbing particles.

34. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a layer of thermal conductor containing highly absorbing particles.

35. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is a metallic layer containing highly absorbing particles.

36. (canceled)

37. (currently amended) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance ~~has the~~ contains high absorption particles as the absorbing material and the high absorption particles are applied on the side facing the energy source and not to the side which faces or is in contact with the target material, the intermediate substance transferring at least some of the incident electromagnetic energy to the target material.

38. (currently amended) A method for modification of a layer of target material comprising the steps of:

generating a directional burst of electromagnetic energy;

applying an intermediate substance on the target material, wherein the intermediate substance contains an absorbing material that has high absorption of at least one frequency band in the burst of electromagnetic energy;

directing the electromagnetic energy burst towards an the intermediate substance having high absorption of at least one frequency band in the burst of electromagnetic energy, the intermediate substance being positioned between the target material and the burst of electromagnetic energy, and being in contact with the target material, thereby converting the electromagnetic energy to thermal energy in the intermediate substance and allowing transfer of the thermal energy from the intermediate substance to the target material without driving the absorbing material into the target material.

39. (currently amended) The method of claim 38 wherein the intermediate ~~material~~ substance is a thin insulating material mixed with grains of material capable of absorbing at least one frequency band of the electromagnetic energy.
40. (currently amended) The method of claim 38 wherein the intermediate ~~material~~ substance is a conducting material with an absorbing substance applied to the side facing the burst of electromagnetic energy.
41. (currently amended) The method of claim 38 wherein the intermediate ~~material~~ substance is mixed with grains of conducting material to form a film that is thermally conducting and optically absorbing.
42. (currently amended) The method of claim 38 wherein the intermediate ~~material~~ substance is mixed with grains of conducting material to form a film having a predetermined pattern of thermal conductivity and optically absorbing.
43. (new) The method of claim 38 wherein the intermediate substance retains the absorbing material and prevents the absorbing material from penetrating into the target material.
44. (new) The method of claim 38 wherein substantially all of the electromagnetic energy is converted into thermal energy and at least 25% of the thermal energy is conducted into the target material.
45. (new) The device of claim 21 further comprising a heat removing device to remove heat from the target material.